

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-9

THE NEW YORK TIMES
25 January 1980

Senators Ask Curb on Scrutiny of U.S. Intelligence

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—A bipartisan group of senators proposed legislation that would tend to encourage more covert operations overseas by United States intelligence agencies and would reduce the Congressional and public scrutiny to which they are now subject.

The measure, introduced by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the New York Democrat, and six other senators, was narrowly focused on removing some of what President Carter last night decried as "unwarranted restraints" on the intelligence community. It did not attempt to construct what the President's State of the Union Message called "a new charter to define clearly the legal authority and accountability of our intelligence agencies."

Senator Walter D. Huddleston, Democrat of Kentucky and chairman of the subcommittee on charters and guidelines of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said this afternoon that he would continue to strive for "comprehensive" legislation that would combine a charter that codified restraints on intelligence agencies with steps to "unhandcuff" them.

Both Senator Huddleston and a White

House spokesman said that "nearly complete" agreement had been reached between the Administration and the Senator on the details of an intelligence charter.

Support for Charter Limited

In a showdown, however, it seemed possible that Congress would opt for "unleashing" the Central Intelligence Agency and other intelligence organs without adopting such a codified charter, for which there is little support in the House and limited support in the Senate.

At a news conference Senator Moynihan and his colleagues unveiled proposed legislation that would repeal a 1974 law that requires the intelligence agencies to advise eight committees, with more than 200 members, in both houses of Congress of covert intelligence operations. The new measure would require that only the Senate and House intelligence panels, with a total of 29 members, be informed of such "special operations."

The legislation would also exempt the C.I.A. from complying with requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act, except for requests by individuals for personal data about themselves.

A third aspect of the bill would make it

a crime for any official or former official to use classified information in making public the name of any intelligence agent, informant or source. The penalty would be a prison sentence of up to 10 years and a fine up to \$50,000. It would also be a crime for someone outside the Government to disclose such names "with the intent to impair or impede the foreign intelligence activities of the United States." Conviction could carry a penalty of one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

The co-sponsors of Mr. Moynihan's bill were Pete V. Domenici of New Mexico, Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming, John C. Danforth of Missouri and John H. Chafee of Rhode Island, all Republicans, and Democratic Senators Henry M. Jackson of Washington and Sam Nunn of Georgia.